



DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

ROOTED IN CHRIST

LENT 2022



Good Friday

“It is finished’; and he bowed his head and handed over his spirit.”

On Good Friday, the entire Church fixes her gaze on the Cross at Calvary. Each member of the Church tries to understand at what cost Christ has won our redemption. In the solemn ceremonies of Good Friday, in the Adoration of the Cross, in the chanting of the 'Reproaches', in the reading of the Passion, and in receiving the pre-consecrated Host, we unite

ourselves to our Savior, and we contemplate our own death to sin in the Death of our Lord.

[Read more](#) from Catholic News Agency



Forgiveness, at least for me, is not holding my eyes closed, saying a prayer and then jumping into a new reality because we believe that is what the Bible asks us to do. In my younger years, I struggled a lot with forgiveness in my life. Every time I heard the parable of the Prodigal Son, it would anger me that the younger son was given a party upon his return.

My biggest struggle with forgiveness was with one of my family members. After many years of being hurt, I decided it was time to break off the toxic relationship. While I knew this was the right move, I also felt terrible. How could I? After all I work for the church. The guilt was so strong that I began to resent the situation even more than I did.

I began to seek an answer to why I could not let this hurt go and why I could not forgive. I read every article I could get my hands on about forgiveness, the whole time wishing that time would eventually heal this open wound.

One Sunday during Lent, I began to scroll on the internet to look for

resources on forgiveness. I was teaching a class on it that week. How ironic, teaching a class on a subject I could not understand myself.

But then I came across this article...which changed everything for me. [Click here](#) to read the article.

So what does forgiveness mean? The first step to understanding forgiveness is learning what it is and isn't.

Why Do We Find It So Hard to Forgive?

One reason we resist forgiving is that we don't really understand what forgiveness means or how it works. We think we do, but we don't. Most of us assume forgiveness means that if we forgive our offenders, they are let off the hook — scot-free — and get to go about their merry ways while we unfairly suffer from their actions. We also may think forgiveness means that we have to be friendly with them again, or go back to the old relationship. While God commands us to forgive others, he never told us to keep trusting those who violated our trust or even to like being around those who hurt us.

So what does forgiveness mean? [The first step to understanding forgiveness is learning what it is and isn't.](#) The next step is giving yourself permission to forgive and forget, letting go of the bitterness while remembering very clearly your rights to healthy boundaries.

Stop judging, that you may not be judged. For as you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you. (Matthew 7:1-2)

It was like a revelation. I could forgive and not have to forget...I was not a bad person for not allowing the offense to occur over and over again. At that moment, I realized that I could still love this person, I could still pray for them, and I could still hope for a future relationship, all while letting go of my own hurt. I had to trust God to handle the situation.

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All of a sudden the parable of the Prodigal Son began to make much more sense to me. I, like the other brother moping in the field, did not see the blessings all around me. It made me crazy that this family member who seemed to not be trying as hard was receiving the same reward. Yet, his father meets him where he is and pleads with him to come inside and rejoice that his brother, who was lost, has now been found, the sinner is forgiven—mercy being shown. The Father reminds and reassures the brother, and me, that all he has is still rightfully his (and mine), and his desire to show mercy and love to the offender does not take away from their relationship.

Once I was able to truly forgive, I realized the huge impact the inability to forgive had on my happiness. Part of going through life with others means sometimes experiencing hurt and betrayal. Forgiving is tough business. It takes courage and resolve to let go of negative feelings when we've been wronged. But forgiveness has brought a kind of peace to my life that only God's grace can give. I still love that family member and hope that someday we can enter into a healthy relationship. But until then, I will pray for their health and well-being.



the *ultimate*
RELATIONSHIP

- 1** GOD CREATED US FOR A RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM
- 2** OUR RELATIONSHIP IS BROKEN THROUGH SIN
- 3** JESUS RESTORES OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER
- 4** WE HAVE THE CHOICE TO ACCEPT OR REJECT THIS OFFER



Take a minute to understand the Ultimate Relationship.



Jacki Douglas is the former diocesan Director for WORD and Lifelong Faith Formation in the Diocese of Scranton. She and her husband, Scott own the Stone Lake Winery and operate the Stone Lake Wine Bar, in addition to running a Bed & Breakfast called the Stone Lake Inn. Jacki is a mother of three and a proud grandmother. She has recently retired from 20 years of ministry to devote time to her family and her business endeavors.

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Diocesan Annual Appeal. Thank you for your generosity!

Diocese of Scranton
2021 **DIOCESAN**
ANNUAL APPEAL 